



# Steward Observatory Newsletter

## November News



### Giant Magellan Telescope Begins Primary Mirror Support System Testing

Inside the [Richard F. Caris Mirror Lab](#) underneath the University of Arizona football stadium, a giant glass mirror covered in a blue, translucent protective coating rests on a hollow steel platform painted white. Engineers and technicians duck as they enter and exit the structure to check on wires, electrical connections and various mechanical hardware components. [Learn more](#) [KGUN9](#)



## **The ‘Beautiful Confusion’ of the First Billion Years Comes Into View**

[Kevin Hainline](#) is part of a team that uses the JWST to find these galaxies, whose brightness, apparent mass, and sheer existence a virtual eyeblink after the Big Bang are among the biggest surprises from the three-year-old mission. And these findings have raised a lot of questions. In August, Hainline and other researchers came together at the Kavli Institute for Theoretical Physics (KITP) in Santa Barbara, California, to hash them all out.. [Quanta Magazine Article](#)

[JADES Team Video](#)



## **Space travel comes with risk – and SpaceX’s Polaris Dawn mission will push the envelope further than any private mission has before**

Dr. Chris Impey, Associate Co-Department Head of the U of A Department of Astronomy, has written extensively about space travel. [Read his newest article in The Conversation.](#)



### **Astronomers catch a glimpse of a uniquely inflated and asymmetric exoplanet**

"This is the first time the east-west asymmetry of any exoplanet has ever been observed as it transits its star, from space," said lead study author **Matthew Murphy**, a graduate student at the U of A Steward Observatory. A transit is when a planet passes in front of its star – like the moon does during a solar eclipse. [Learn more](#)



### **Webb telescope snaps view of an exploded star. It's an invaluable find.**

"The lens, consisting of a cluster of galaxies that is situated between the supernova and us, bends the supernova's light into multiple images," **Brenda Frye**, an astronomer from the **University of Arizona** who helped undertake the [new research](#), said in a statement. [Learn more](#)

## **In the Spotlight**



**"I have always been fascinated with two things: space and math,"** says Jonah Lotz.

As Jonah Lotz prepares to graduate with his BS in Astronomy and Computer Science, he reflects on highlights from his time at Steward Observatory. [Read his full interview.](#)





**“I smash galaxies together in a supercomputer,” says Himansh Rathore**

“I smash galaxies together in a supercomputer,” says Himansh Rathore about his research at Steward Observatory. Himansh is is a PhD scholar and a NASA FINESST Fellow at Steward Observatory. He recently passed his oral preliminary exam and is interested in studying galaxy dynamics, computational astrophysics, extra-galactic astronomy, and cosmology. As he pursues his PhD research, he believes “the elegance lies not in the destination, but in the journey itself.” [Full interview](#)

## **Public Evening Lecture Series**

### **Fall Semester 2024**

We look forward to you joining us this semester to learn more about the exciting science taking place in Astronomy!

#### **Monday, November 4**

*Discovering the Most Distant Supernovae Thus Far with JWST*

*Christa DeCoursey, Steward Observatory*

#### **Monday, November 18**

*Jupiter's Insanely Volcanically Active Moon Io*

*Dr. Alfred McEwen, Regents Professor, Lunar & Planetary Lab*

#### **Monday, November 25**

*¿Cuántos Soles Hay?*

(This lecture will be given in Spanish.)

Dr. Rafael Bertolotto, Steward Observatory

**Monday, December 2**

***Born in the Spotlight: the Mysterious Proplyds***

Dr. Dominika Itrich, Steward Observatory

Location: Steward Observatory Lecture Hall N210

**Doors open at 7:00 pm and Lectures begin at 7:30 pm MST**

Nearest parking 2nd Street or Cherry Ave Garage

Telescope viewing follows at 8:30 PM - Weather Permitting

Watch via **ZOOM** link <https://arizona.zoom.us/j/4470189357>

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**Podcasts of Previous Public Evening Lectures**

**Monday, October 21**

[\*Paradoxes & Conundrums of Relativity\*](#)

*Dr. Vasileios Paschalidis, Steward Observatory*

**Monday, October 7**

[\*An Introduction to Space Law\*](#)

*Prof. Andrew Woods*

September 23

[\*JWST: The First Two Years of discoveries from the Dawn of Time\*](#)

Dr. Kevin Hainline, Steward Observatory

September 13

[\*Striking Gold in the Universe\*](#)

Dr. Wen-Fai Fong, Northwestern University

2024 Aaronson Prize Awardee

If you miss a lecture -- [view the video here](#)

[Astronomy Colloquia](#)

### Space Drafts: Astronomy Lectures

The events listed above are off campus astronomy activities we want you to be aware of and enjoy, if interested. These events are not part of the Department of Astronomy or Steward Observatory public outreach. [Learn more](#)

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### Public Mirror Lab Tours

**Tickets are now available through June 2025**

This 90-minute tour provides a unique opportunity to learn how we produce the largest (8.4 meters / 27ft) and the most advanced telescope mirrors in the world. We hope to see you soon! [More information](#)

**Mt Lemmon SkyNights StarGazing Program.**

**Tickets are on sale through December, 2024**

SkyNights is a 5 hour astronomy program on the summit of Mt. Lemmon. Your experience begins with a scenic drive up this Sky Island mountain which is a unique trip by its self. This will be followed by a spectacular sunset phenomenon and

then on to stargazing using the Shulman 32" and Phillips 24" telescopes which are the largest public viewing telescopes in southern Arizona. No prior astronomical knowledge is required—just bring your enthusiasm and prepare to be amazed! This is a fun program for curious minds aged 7 and up. Come discover the wonders of the Universe with us!

[More information](#)

### Friends of Steward Observatory



[Your donation](#) provides astronomy students the chance to grow their skills, experience discovery and build the confidence necessary to take on the challenging problems of the future. These opportunities are priceless, but providing them requires funding.

Our students are extremely grateful for your investment in Astronomy. To a student, every dollar is important. Your donation goes directly to help support our innovative students in the form of scholarships and summer research project needs. Students are working on cutting-edge research to enhance our knowledge and understanding of the universe.

These students are the next-generation of scientists who will be making the great discoveries in the future. Student success builds our world-class astronomy program that continues to stand out from our peers and expands Arizona's research horizons.

**Your donation is tax deductible!**

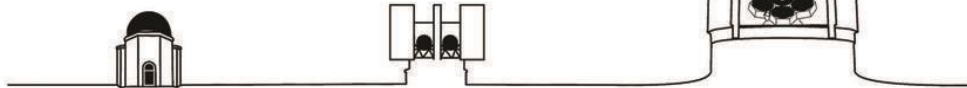
**Supporting the next-generation of science and discovery is the best reward.**

[Learn more](#)



THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA  
COLLEGE OF SCIENCE

Astronomy  
& Steward Observatory



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